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The Spirit of
the Woods
A COMEDY
—BY—
EDWARD GRUSE

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EVERT JANSEN WENDELL
(CLASS OF 1882)
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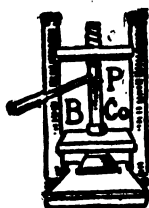
The Spirit of the Woods & &



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...By...

EDWARD GRUSE



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ACT I

SCENE I

(Pavia, Michael's house.)

Enter Michael and Burdette.

MICH. How fares the day, good neighbor?

BUR. Well, and yet

Not well.

MICH. How can a man be well and yet

Not well? These statements truly counter-
dict

Each other.

BUR. Nay, not in the least, for when

I raise the curtain of my eyes and glance

Into the inmost depths of life, there lumes

Up much of blissful, happy memory,

Much concord and much happiness and yet

When I think on Sothern's condition, there

Arises in this concord, discord harsh.

MICH. You've brought him home, have you?

BUR. Yea, so I have

But yesterday I did him hither bring;

I travelled to the university

To first hold thoro consultation with
The faculty 'bout his peculiar case.
E'er I him home would bring. They thot
Him ill; they said he would himself apply
Not to his studies strenuously enough;
And lagged far in his class behind and that
He ate but little, now and then a bite,
With which behavior he grew thin and pale
And strangely melancholy.

MICH. 'Tis a strange
Coincidence that both our sons should be
Thus similarly afflicted. Mine I brought
Home early and still it doth cling to him
Most stubbornly.

BUR. 'Tis strange, 'tis very strange.

MICH. Methinks 'tis a disease brought by
their age.

For often when a youth maturity
Doth reach, his attitude toward everything
Begins to change; he gradually lets drop
His early dreams and restless fantasies,
And faintly peeps upon the great, great
world,

And as the curtain rises gradually,
Causing the widening horizon to
Appear wider and wider, he doth feel
A certain insufficiency within
Himself, a dread incapability,
To cope with what the opening scene dis-
closes.

Just from his childish dreams divided, on

Which he, so long had builded, he must now
Seek new foundation for his opening mind.
He's as one lost, scare knowing where to
go.

BUR. I believe 'tis the true diagnoses for
Their ailment, hast thou thot of a remedy?

MICH. That have I done, I think if they get
out,

Out in the open air and exercise
Themselves free from all care they'd soon
regain

Their lost vitality.

BUR. But whither should
They go, what place?

MICH. Why to the woods let's say,
Where many go to rest themselves.

BUR. So be it.

MICH. When shall they go?

BUR. To-morrow morning let
Them start.

MICH. 'Tis well; we separately them will
Instruct and have them to prepare them-
selves.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE 2 (same)

Enter Halla and Sothern.

HALL. Are your things packed?

SOTH. Yea nearly all; I'm just

Having the last attended to.

HALL. Mine are

All ready.

SOTH. How strikes this thee?

HAL. It came too sud'n

For one to form opinions, yet it strikes
Me suitably enough; as long as we
Yet cling upon our parents' garments for
Protection, we must such impediments
To our free happiness expect, as they
Attempt provisions for our welfare make
And do for us what they think best.

SOTH. I believe

I'd sooner at the university
Have staid, than stroll without a purpose in
The woods.

HAL. What say you so? I was much pleased
To get my liberty.

SOTH. And fly to her,

To Hermia not? I tell thee, Halla, that
Thou art in greater bondage, when with her
Then when matriculated in the school's
Great catalogue, bound to obey its rules.

HAL. Nay, 'tis not so! But art thou, too, not
glad

To come again in Agatha's sweet presence?
Doth not that melancholic drowsiness
Roll from thee nay, like hazy summer clouds
Before a perfumed western wind, when thou
Dost gaze upon her continence?

SOTH. Yes, but

My studies.

HAL. Fye on them, forget them all,

Think no more what a text contains, until

A more desirable time than now; until

Thy languid spirit doth restore itself.

SOTH. Thou hast most wonderfully changed
since I

Last saw thee, I thot that thy spirits were

Far lower sunk than mine.

HAL. But I've been home

A week or two, while you but yesterday

Arrived, thus giving me time to become

Well acclimated to conditions here.

SOTH. But thou need'st for these old sur-
roundings, so

Familiar to thy mind in all details,

No acclimation.

HAL. Yea, indeed, I do,

For every change of place or rank we need

To harmonize our mind and spirits with

Our new conditions, makes no difference

How well acquainted we are with the place,

Or station to which we do change; and thou

With thy coy nature art especially slow,

To shake off thine old ways and atmosphere

For new accommodations.

SOTH. 'Tis a truth,

That I shall ne'er be acclimated to

The world so generally as thou art, Halla,

For thou like some can'st go most any place,

Enter most any company and feel
At home. The great Creator has not put
It in my frame to be on such good terms
With all the world.

HAL. Thou think'st but so, Sothern.
Art thou not formed like I? A head like
mine
Two eyes, two ears, a mouth, a nose like
mine
So in dimensions versatile, in all
Thou'rt similar to me; so in the mind
Those finer abstract qualities thou hast
As well as I and if thou dost now load,
Me with what thou dost lack, I'll tell thee
straight
Thou hast it, too, it needs development
Is all.

SOTH. But who can be so brood, so great,
So comprehensive; who can be possessed
With all these qualities at once and train
Them equally? We fall into a rut
From which we cannot free ourselves and
let
The sands wash o'er the various paths,
which lead
In versatile directions each as far
As doth the rut in which we've fallen. So
Must we do to accomplish anything,
Just as a stream, which has a channel, has
More force than that, which spreads its wa-
ters wide,

So man when he doth concentrate his powers

And energy, doth have more force, than he
Who spreads it everywhere.

HAL. Men do their own

Conditions make, a truth which I but learned
Just recently, for when I felt downcast
And melancholy at our learned school,
I fancied everyone, the whole great world
And everything it did contain against me.
I felt if I could send it from me forth
I'd tell humanity some wondrous things
Instructing it in all its future course,
The method of procedure, as it was,
Then not according to my inmost will
Proceeding and not rightly; but since, I thot
If man is melancholy, sad and sick
Of life's monotony, that all the world
Seems strangely colored, 'tis because we are
But color blind and need the vision of
Our mind reset.

SORH. That may be true indeed;

Yet when a man feels thus, he feels just so
And feels no other way; he cannot set
His mind to such calm thots, until it is
O'er with. But tell me, Halla, when thou
didst,

Feel as I now feel did'st thou have a pain
Within thy head?

HAL. Occasionally.

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SOTH. And in

Thy back?

HAL. Yea, as I now remember.

SOTH. And in

Thy side?

HAL. Oh, slightly so.

SOTH. A heaviness

About the region of thy heart?

HAL. Yea, there

Was situated the ganglia from which

All pain proceeded.

SOTH. There's some comfort when

One learns of others, having symptoms like

Your own. And, Halla, thou art now so
changed.

Think'st thou't go back to study soon again.

HAL. Talk not of studies, Sothern.

SOTH. What lik'st not

The university.

HAL. Nay, not so well.

As the real world.

SOTH. Why so?

HAL. Its atmosphere

Is so surcharged with unreality,

It forms a world aloft from that which's
real,

Which if we breathe awhile 'tis hard again

To full enjoy the world's dull air.

SOTH. I feel

No change.

HAL. For thou dost ever wheel thy mind

To such a plane, give me the real hard world
To struggle in and I shall be content.
If there is hunger to endure, let me
Endure my share, if poverty is to
Be borne, let me not be exempt from my
Fair share, and so in all the humble states
Of life, which in reality is life
Let me partake; let nothing which to man's
Experience is common from me be
Exempt.

SORH. But think of all the souls we meet,
Of all the friendships formed.

HAL. One cannot know
A person in a place where he doth walk
In top-most spirits if he knows not how
He acts within his circle intimate
At home, where he reveals himself the most.
Enter Wedmore.

WED. What sigh you still your souls away?
Oh, fools!

You truly make a sorrowful picture
Methinks a Raphael could not paint the trite
Expression flowing from your continence.
When I was at your age I ne'er complained.
I took the world just as it came and when
Things came most 'gainst my nature then
was I

In gayest spirits. Go run about the fields
In lusty pace; ascend the neighboring hills;
Then duck yourselves well in the brook and
you

Will leave much of this drollery behind,
You in your course.

HAL. Would'st thou not go along
With us, Wedmore?

WED. What want I in the woods?

HAL. Why keep us company.

SOTH. Yea, we'll not know,
How profitably to pass our time away.

WED. When go you hence?

HAL. To-morrow morning.

WED. What,
So soon? well may the fairies of the woods
Put in your dropping hearts some of their
sweet

Transforming essence, which if I with you
Would go, they'd dote on me; 'tis therefore
I

Am loath to go. I would that you should
drink

In all their benefit and by it profit.

I think but shortly after you arrive

To where you go you'll sing and whistle
thru

The whole of night and keep awake the
good

Inhabitants, who will yet chase you home.

For your unmanly demeanor; you

Will be so loud that all the fish will leave

The rock, their native haunt, for deeper wa-
ters

THE SPIRIT OF THE WOODS 11

And if you wish to catch some on your
hook

They'll be far out of reach. But while I
think

Of it I have a brother in the woods.

SOTH. A brother?

HAL. 'Tis strange we never heard of him.

WED. He lives secluded; he and I are twins.

And so resemble one another in

All things you could not tell us two apart.

If you him see make yourselves known to
him;

His name is Brisben.

HAL. We will search him out.

WED. So do. now may you have a prosper-
ous journey.

An elevating period of your life.

While there, and a most safe return.

SOTH. We thank

You for your courtesy and wish you would

Come 'long.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE 3

(Padua) Hermia's house.

Enter Hermia and Agatha.

HERM. Pray seat yourself.

AG. If you do so command.

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HERM. Think'st Sothern has much changed?

AG. Oh, some.

HERM. I think

His cheeks have fallen much since he left
home

For his studies.

AG. Yet not so much but what

They will fill out again and look as they
Were wont.

HERM. They say 'twas all for thee that he
Became so strangely changed.

AG. The poor, poor soul,

I knew not I could raise a heart to such
A pitch of love.

HERM. But, Agatha, knowest thou

That many breasts do secretly within
Their boundaries pine. Some hearts are
so made up,

So sensitive, so easily o'erpowered
That they do hold the image of a face,
Which they but once beheld, and long to see
Its beam again, which ne'er perhaps they
will,

And which will afterward, a long time be,
The center of their brooding.

AG. Such a soul

Is elemental, that so far can shed,
Its great influence; yet methinks in time
It doth become monotonous to see
This motley panorama pass before
The eyes most constantly and changing all

The while, without our grasping hold on them.

'Twould be like viewing Cæsar's grand parade,

His trappings and all preparations rich,
Of which we'd weary by the looking at.
He who doth give attention to but one
Particularly of all his company
Establishes between himself and such
A one, a deep relationship, which dotes
Not on the surface, as when he doth crave
Companionship, yet stands aloft from men.
But delves into the deeps of life.

HERM. We find

Most strange relationships thus formed.

AG. Did'st thou

E'er think sweet, Hermia, what a strange thing

Love is.

HERM. That did I not.

AG. Think how it makes

Us act, so foolishly. When we're in love
We lose control of all senses and
Act by the impulse of that passion, which
Doth master us.

HERM. Love is a mystery

We cannot analyze; we cannot say
It has so many grains of this or that,
So many parts of any element;
'Tis classed all by itself and therefore 'tis,

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Either the all-embracing element,
Or else it doth contain a part of all.

AG. It plays a most peculiar part in life,
And on some hearts, like Sothern's it doth
wield

Its powers weirdly. I do like to sport
With him he takes the world so heavily.

HERM. I ne'er can my most genuine thoughts
conceal,

Wherefore I blame myself for being oft
So constant.

AG. Think'st that Halla has much changed
Since he returned?

HERM. Yea, very much indeed;
He is becoming fastly frolicksome
And most adventurous.

AG. Thou'st truly been
A good physician, Hermia, I believe
I must take lessons from thee, that I can
Restore poor Sothern's spirits.

HERM. Thou hast not
As yet had time, for he has just returned.

AG. Nor shall I have sufficient time, for he
Doth go again to-morrow. But Hermia,
How did'st thou do? Didst thou around
his neck

Thine arms clasp and say in soft, sweet
tones

"Halla, thine eye whose spark doth set my
soul

Aflame is suddenly dimmed, thy rosy cheek
Is fallen."

HERM. Nay, nay, Agatha, I said
Not thus, I nothing said.

AG. Oh, 'twas your eyes,
Your lumed up countenance, which spoke
and drove
That foreign strangeness from his restless
mind.

But dost thou not desire to with them go
To the woods?

HERM. That would I not.

AG. I long to go
I love to be outdoors and spend time as
I please.

HERM. My inclination ne'er did turn
That way.

AG. Then differ we in spirit.
Enter Halla and Sothern.

HAL. Our greetings, ladies.

AG. Welcome hither.

SOTh. Thus
Are we all met.

HERM. And met most happily.

HAL. Nay, nay, not happily.

AG. Why go you soon?

SOTh. To-morrow.

HERM. To-morrow?

HAL. E'en then.

AG. So soon? This life
Is but the cruel succession of farewells.

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The joy contracted by glad meetings is
All drowned by parting.

HAL. Let there be no parting.

Come with us long.

HERM. That could we not do well,
Such venture would not recommend itself
Best to our sex and then I care not much
To go.

HAL. With me?

HERM. My strength forbids.

SOTH. Would'st thou go, Agatha?

AG. With all my heart.

SOTH. With me?

AG. With thee and all the company.

SOTH. But Hermia cares not to go and you
Would lonely be alone. But we must go.
Farewell, till we return.

HERM. But you'll not
Be long away.

HAL. Nay, not so long, farewell
We'll cut the season short.

AG. May heaven haste
A speedy, safe return.

SOTH. And meanwhile keep
Your beings well.

SCENE IV

(Michael's house.)

Enter Hobeck and Jean.

HOB. This is a strange, peculiar world in
which

We live and move and have our being,
Jean.

The more I meditate upon its ways,
Its restless movements undulation like;
The more I catch the sad, unsteady sound
The scale of struggling humanity.
I'm wrapt in deeper, deeper mystery.
For here is one who's sick because of love,
And here another who is ill from toil,
Another from irregularity,
And so could we a catalogue of great
Contents thus manufacture easily,
Containing mankind's versatility.

JEAN. But those who are by love made sick
and wan

Are in reality not ill, they are
But overfilled with something which if in
The right proportion taken elevates
The spirits.

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HOB. How can it two actions have?

JEAN. 'Tis like a poison, which administered
According to the right prescription
Doth take most sud'n and violent effect
But if too little or too much be used
'Twill not take proper hold.

HOB. This truly is

A most unseemly figure; do not speak
Again of poison, speak as you are wont
To speak of meadows, woods and babbling
brooks,

Of birds and how they sing, speak where
your thots

Most dwell, I do not like that word, poison.
It grates my nerves too much, I'll tell thee,
Jean,

I was once in that melancholy state,
When all the world seemed harshly out of
tune,

And thot of poison and of daggers keen.
Although that foolish stage is over with,
Yet still the mention of these instruments
Appalls my spirits, for still memory
Brings back the fancy of those times.

JEAN. A foolish state of mind, which many
wedge

Their passions to.

HOB. Mine came about like this:

I thot of how one could another slay,
How he must force his will to utmost
bounds

To make his body act against that law,
Which in God's canon is recorded as
The most divine that mortal man can break;
And as I pondered in this attitude
I wrought up my imagination to
Such height, I feared that I would some one
slay,

As the propelling mean, thus made the dread
Extreme inevitable, which I abhorred.
Then thot I, too, of how men could their
own

Life take, what operation of the mind
Lead them to so resolve, what conflicts
great,

What struggle in the soul, what agony,
What cruel procrastination must precede
This act, and as I thought, the negative
I so upheld, the very fact of such
Repugnance, made me fear I would thus act.
Now when I hear pronounced those dreadful
words

Poison and daggers it doth bring to mind
Those former loathsome, dark imaginings,
Whose memory still makes me somewhat
quake

With dread.

JEAN. Thou mak'st me laugh, thy disposition
is

So irritable and yet I should show pity.
Such dark and gloomy thots I never let
Inhabit of that divine organ, the brain,

Those holy cavities, what profit it
When just as well we can more charitable
Ones nourish?

HOB. But all minds are not alike
Composed.

JEAN. But thou hast said that I should speak
Of woods and streams, of meadows and of
birds,
How lik'st thou then the journey to the
woods?

HOB. I think it will do all our spirits good
Think not you so?

JEAN. Ay so, I could there dwell
A lifetime and not weary of the scene.
Enter Empson, Halla and Sothern.

EMP. What are you not yet ready? We are
all
Prepared to go.

JEAN. It will not take us long.

HAL. We must make haste else we will come
to-day,
Not to our destination.

SOTH. It is most
Enjoyable to travel while the sun
Yet journeys in the east.

Enter Michael and Burdette.

MICH. What linger you still here? Behold
the sun

Which doth divide the curtains of the night,
Already has above the hills upheaved
Its brilliant orb and doth the sky illumine

With golden fire; you have already lost
A quarter of an hour.

BUR. You must be gone
Immediately, or else you cannot make
The journey in one day.

HAL. We are now on
The point of setting out.

MICH. Then haste you on.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE V.

Hermia's House.

Enter Wedmore.

WED. Ho, porter, ho.
Enter Porter.

POR. What is your will?

WED. Go call
Both Agatha and Hermia hither.

POR. I will. (Exit).

WED. Ha, ha, ha, I did tell them in the woods
I had a brother and besides a twin,
'Tis but a falsehood innocently invented.
I never had a brother in the world;
To tell the truth the earth would not have
room

For two such personalities as I
And yet they saw that not, ha, ha, ha, ha.
If comes to argument I'll tell them that

'Twas Castor and Pollux which I did mean.
Now will I take along with me disguised
Both Hermia and Agatha and stir
The woods so up with merriment that all
The trees will look on me and smile and
birds

Will cease from singing for a time to watch
The sport and brooks will bear the joy along.
There's too much melancholy in the world;
I by this effort will it drive all out,
And in its stead plant joy and merriment.
It has no place in human hearts; no, none.
If they come back as melancholy as
They went, my name's not Wedmore.

Enter Hermia and Agatha.

Here you are!

Good morning, both.

HER. Good morning, Wedmore.

AG. What

Doth bring you here at this unusual hour?

WED. For me it is indeed an unusual hour,
But I just said, "Now sleep get thee from off
My brow and break away the magic of
Thy poppy sweet," and after dozing some
I hither came.

HERM. Are they already gone?

WED. Yea, gone and I do mean to follow
them.

AG. Take us along.

WED. 'Twould not become your sex.

AG. What becomes one becomes another.

WED. Thou

Hast a romantic spirit, Agatha.

HERM. So have I her oft told, I would not go.

WED. Not go? 'Twould do thee good.

AG. To one thou say'st

It is not good to go and to the other,

It is.

WED. I most dislike vain repetition

And therefore 'tis I speak so.

AG. It is not honest to deviate from truth

For entertainment.

WED. Well, to tell the truth

I came to take you both.

AG. A happy thot.

Now to the woods we go, come, Hermia,

Thou must along.

HERM. I'll follow you.

WED. Yea, yea,

Disguise yourselves as youths that they will
not

You recognize.

AG. So let it be.

WED. Then get

You ready for the journey to the woods,

Where we'll forget our sorrows for a sea-
son.

(Exeunt.)

ACT II

SCENE I

(The woods) (moonlight)

Enter Halla and Sothern.

HAL. How feel'st thy body, Sothern; has it
tired

By traveling?

SOTH. It was when we arrived
Quite worn, but now this genial atmosphere
Doth drive away fatigue.

HAL. 'Tis excellent,
This outdoor life it makes us more like men.

SOTH. But tell me, Halla, think'st thou yet
of her,
Of Hermia?

HAL. Occasionally I think
Of her, yet 'mong these splendid things, her
form

Holds not a foremost place, there's too
much here

To look upon, to dream of former things.

SOTH. But, Halla, this rich panorama all

The more reminds me of sweet Agatha;
 Her being is so strongly planted in
 My mind, I cannot turn but what I see
 Her countenance, even these mighty trees
 As they do swing their branches to the wind
 And keep their foliage in endless motion,
 Making the sunbeams or those of the moon,
 Which now doth shed their radiance on the
 earth,

To dance about most merrily from leaf
 To leaf, e'en they reflect resemblance
 Of her divinity. The birds as they
 Their sweet throats tune to pleasant melody,
 Vibrate inflection of her gentle voice.
 And so naught can I look upon, but what
 Is colored by her seeming presence, as
 If she so great and elemental was
 As to exist in everything.

HAL. Thou art

A slave to thy imagination, Sothern.
 Yet I do believe in a few days all this
 Will change considerably, when thou dost
 once

Get in the spirits of the woods 'twill change
 Thee altogether. If her spirit haunts
 These premises, well so stir up the woods
 As soon to drive it out.

SOTH. I know not if
 That can be done.

Enter Jean.

Where hast thou been?

JEAN. I have been wandering as I am wont
To do when I come hither, I've explored
This region as no other mortal has,
There's scarce a tree, a spot of open space,
A brook, a spring, a hill, a valley, that
I know not where it is. How sweet it is
When I do find a haunt where no man has
E'er been and I'm the first to drink its
beauty.

It makes me think of how much beauty on
This earth is never seen, for whether man
Doth gaze on it or not, it matters not;
'Tis there; the sun doth kiss it just as sweet
As if all eyes the One Omnipotent
E'er put in skulls the scene beheld.

HAL. To-night

Methot thou would'st be weary and not
care

To wander after this day's journey.

JEAN. I

Scarce know what weary means I ne'er fall
Into its providence.

SOTH. Thou seem'st to be

A part of nature, Jean.

JEAN. Lift up your eyes

And look into the heavens; no cloud infects
That great unlimited expanse of space.
Behold how beautiful that full face of the
moon

Doth now ascend her throne; as she

Doth float so clear, so bright and so majestic

With calm and steady equilibrium

I really believe there's music in the spheres.

HAL. 'Tis beautiful.

SOTH. Yea, wonderfully so.

JEAN. See how the stars do follow her, each proud

Doth seem to have so fair a queen; now that
Same moon doth shed its silvery beams on
scenes

Which eyes have ne'er beheld, the same as
here

Scenes, which irradiate their beauty for
None but their own creator, who doth see
But in a glance the whole of earth.

SOTH. Thou hast

A sane philosophy.

Enter Hobeck with fish.

What, angling

So late?

HOB. I love to angle by the moon.

JEAN. Meanest thou the declination angle?

HOB. Nay,

That is astronomy, thou know'st what

I mean; this angle points not up but down.

JEAN. What kind of fish hast caught?

That know I not.

SOTH. The poor, poor things, where hooked
you them?

HOB. Why in

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The mouth, think'st in the tail, they bite but
with

The mouth.

SOTH. How must they feel, when they, poor
things,

Think they do grasp a meal, but do instead
Catch a cruel hook.

HOB. But we require the meat.

We need some breakfast not? and fish just
think,

'Tis good food for the brain.

JEAN. Thou'rt thotful, Hobeck,

To thus provide for us.

HAL. If fish were good

For brains, then fishermen ought to have
brains,

So great their skulls could scarcely them
contain.

'Tis but a fish story.

HOB. But I saw one

While at the river who with me did fish;

A most peculiar personage, who said

His food was mainly fish and such a store

Of wisdom he possessed as I ne'er saw

Before.

JEAN. Whether did he go?

HOB. As I

Came hither he went to his hut.

JEAN. And where

Is that?

HOB. That know I not.

JEAN. 'Tis strange for all
My rambling I saw that not.

HAL. But we
Must seek him out.

JEAN. So will we do to-morrow.

HOB. But he comes
To angle every day and there can we
Catch sight of him.

SOTH. We'll search him there.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE II, same.

Enter Sothern and Halla.

SOTH. But did not Wedmore say he had here-
in

These woods a brother?

HAL. That he did.

SOTH. Perhaps

The man they saw was him.

HAL. It might have been,
And yet did Wedmore say his personage
Did so resemble him, that he came here
On purpose to avoid confusion 'tween
The two. Now if he so resemble him,
As twins are wont each other to resemble,
They would've descried the likeness.

SOTH. Truly so.

HAL. It could have not been him.

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SOTH. 'Tis evident.

Enter Jean, Hobeck and Empson.

JEAN. How beautiful and fresh the morning
is.

Behold how thru the rule of night the heav-
ens,

From their most copious source have dropt
down pearls

Of their own secret manufacture

And hung them on the grass and leaves and
flowers,

So that the kingly sun as he reviews

On daily embassage the working of

The spheres may have reception adequate.

The birds renew their song and to their note,

The partridge drums his noisy wing and all,
Is gay.

HAL. 'Tis very wholesome, it doth e'en

Draw Sothern from his inner self.

HOB. I think

Myself a youth again when I was wont
To roam.

EMP. That feeling stirs me, too.

JEAN. Be young

Always, let age not have dominion o'er

Thee till its proper time for that doth come

Too soon.

SOTH. But who can bear all what is to

Be borne, in this hard fight of life and still

Continue young?

JEAN. All, if they but think so.

HOB. You speak of youth and know not what
you mean.

We all are young as long as we are mortal,
Would we live long as did Methuselah
If we consider mortality.

EMP. 'Tis so we die not with the flesh.

JEAN. But some

Cut off eternity, becoming old
Too young, so on their mind life's burden
falls

Too heavily, as they have not the strength,
The gradual development, to bear
The shocks which they encounter, genially.
Now this soft air will make us all seem
young,

At least in spirit, if our limbs are old;
It opens the horizon of the mind
To come out in the open air beneath
The canopy of heaven, for in the streets
Our visions cramped and barricaded till
Our senses narrow, there we cannot gaze
Into infinitude as here and give
Our souls free play.

HAL. Here are we more complete.

Enter Pinder.

PIN. What do you here?

HOB. Good morning, we were 'bout
To search you out.

PIN. Ha! thine's the face I saw
Last evening at the river, not?

HOB. So 'tis.

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PIN. Then belong'st thou to this company?

HOB. I do.

PIN. Why came you to this place?

JEAN. We came in truth.

Our spirits to refresh.

PIN. So do men come

The summer thru, yet thinking not, I have

Myself a spirit to refresh. Where should

I go if I for recreation searched?

Yet men will come and here disturb my
peace.

And yet, 'tis well, 'tis well, I like to see

A face occasionally, 'tis better than

To look on trees and streams without a
change.

And man's a noble creature to behold.

A change is good, 'tis good.

JEAN. How long hast thou

Here lived?

PIN. How long? Some twenty years or more.

HAL. A long time.

HOB. Lived you here alone so long?

PIN. So long I've lived beneath my roof
alone;

'Tis long and yet it is not long; for when
We're once caught up by wings of fleeting
time

Were borne along much swifter than we are

Aware; we grow old thinking still ourselves

In prime of life, still young and vigorous.

Age is our most unkindly enemy

And steals away that which we fain would keep.

Health, strength and beauty all those qualities,

Which make us closely to angels akin.

I was once young, I had as fair a cheek,

As beaming eyes, as curly, golden locks

As the Creator e'er graced mortal with,

But what of that they're all gone now, all gone,

What profit all these things when they're
So fleet?

The belle of rich society with face

And form as lovely as a goddess,

Must lose the lustre of her beaming eyes,

The beauty of her dimpled, rosy cheek,

When wrinkles drive proud beauty from his seat;

Who cares for her then when she's lost her charms,

More than they care for any aged one?

No one, no one; I tell thee, youths, you are

Now young, but soon, ay soon, you will be old,

And then on your smooth alabaster skin

Will wrinkles form and features rudely change.

But go enjoy yourselves, enjoy yourselves,

I give you liberty.

SOTH. According to

Your theory I have thot real oft.

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PIN. I found in you a chord responsive to
My inner nature? Give me then thy hand.
What is thy name?

SO TH. Sothern.

PIN. Sothern? It is
A goodly name, your mind is older than
Your body.

JEAN. 'Tis too old I'd rather see
A younger spirit than a younger body.
For man may just as well be gay and laugh
As sit downcast and mourn, 'twould be the
more
Fulfilling his divinity.

PIN. Ay smile,
Laugh, have your fill, dissolve in merriment,
And yet within a few brief fleeting years,
Men will forget that you e'er smiled or
laughed
Or e'er was gay. When I do laugh, I so
Upset my nature that it takes a long,
Long time to set it to its natural trend
Again. But when I meditate upon
The groaning struggle of humanity,
And hold to that most elevated height
My mind, then, seem I lifted to a height
Just level with our immortality;
And have a thot which will forever live.
Yet laugh, be gay, for we are not alike
In nature.

JEAN. I will ne'er restrain myself
From merriment e'en if my sides should split

For laughter ; we do live but once, why sit
And sigh for nought ?

PIN. That is the vital point.

We but one journey have, just one, in which
To make our earthly pilgrimage, the path
Of which attracts with a magnetic spark
Our feet to an uncertain destiny,
While heavenly currents try its power o'er-
come.

How every man his place doth magnify,
On earth, and thinks if he succumbs to dust,
Then plucked the flower is, which gave per-
fume

And life to all he knew ; but he doth leave
No gap, for 'tis filled up as soon as is
The cavity made by one's finger in
A stream, when from its current taken out.
For Alexander, Cæsar, Brutus all,
Who once o'er nearly all the world held
sway,

Are dead and still the world without them
moves

And manages without them its affairs.

Then what are we who govern but our lives,
Shall we have greater memory than these ?

JEAN. But thou hast life most strangely col-
ored.

PIN. Laugh,

Yea, laugh, 'tis well, 'tis well, that you
should laugh.

I laugh, but inwardly ; the trees and streams,

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The birds and flowers, all make me laugh,
so as

I laugh not as you laugh, and you not as
I laugh, I'll say farewell . (Exit.)

HOB. We'll meet again,

HAL. What manner of a man is this who
seems

Like nature's self.

JEAN. One that has shaken off
Connections with humanity.

SOTH. Ay, but

He has the spirit of a prophet.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE III, same.

Enter Wedmore, Hermia and Agatha.

WED. Now are we here.

AG. Is this the woods?

WED. This is

Most truly, cannot you tell woods when in
The sacred holiness of their cool sway?
See you not trees and flowers and foliage,
And everything which go to make the
woods.

HERM. I'm glad we're here; the journey has
been long

For one not used to traveling.

WED. What long!

In expeditions of this kind we're borne

'Long by our spirits, not by limbs.

HERM. How e'er

I made the journey I am weary, tho
But in the flesh, whereas if I had by
The spirits traveled I would've been weary
In spirit, which is worse than weariness
Of flesh.

WED. We'll have no weary spirits here.

Like you the woods?

AG. 'Tis my delight; I wish

I were a bird that I could sit all day
Among the branches of the trees and sing
Sweet melodies.

HERM. You do not mean a bird,

Sweet Agatha.

AG. Why, yes, a bird.

WED. When I

Hear people make a wish I would that I
Had power their wish to grant to let them
see,

Their absurd incongruities. A bird?

Just think a bird of Agatha, a bird,

Why, I'd just like to see thee turn a bird
And watch thee flit among the branches
high,

And sing until your weary throat would
burn.

Would'st thou be a bird, Hermia?

HERM. Nay, nay,

I'd rather be a woman.

WED. Yea, a woman.

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Those who desire not more than they deserve

Do get what they desire, while those who do
Desire what they can never get, get not
What they desire; that is true reasoning.

AG. 'Tis reason without season.

WED. Nay, not so

This reasoned I in June and therefore this
Has a true season.

SCENE IV.

Same.

Enter Jean, Hobeck and Empson.

JEAN. Here flies the time most merrily.

EMP. Indeed,

We do not sit and watch the clock, as when
In Padua.

HOB. Would that our lives were not

Chopped up by moments; everything we do
We have for its performance a set time.

We undertake a thing and in so long
A time it must be executed else

We lose time in some other proposition.

Time makes a slave, machine of all us men
And drives us 'bout with its coy, playful
ticks.

The night and day for time would be enough
Division for us mortals. For often

When I do sink into a blessed thot,
Then must I say unto my soul "leave off,
leave off,
'Tis time; no longer thou canst linger here.
I often wished that I could think a thot
Until the end and not leave off when 'tis
But half complete, and when I undertake
A thing I gladly do, could I but work
Until 'tis finished, but these saucy clocks
Do make us dance to their dull tick.

JEAN. We must

Have time or else we'd be lost in the world.
If men were by their own emotions led
And guided, this would be a mixed up world.
For here is one in love with sleep, who
would
Sleep more than he would toil, and here's
another
Who for the love of gain would lose much
sleep
Thru toil; so would our inclinations lead
Us to the things we loved the most and best.
Then poets would dream, and dream them-
selves to death,
Musicians would at length with melody
Their brains confuse and this would truly be
A most peculiar world.

EMP. Yet in this world

We can have these two elements combined.
We can have both time and propensities
Commingle, for one world is in the mind,

That what we long to be and dream of oft
And even while we listen to the clock
The other world doth keep its motion up
Within, scarce noticing what is without.

HOB. Yet these two are ne'er quite in harmony,

For see how Sothern is improving since
He's free from bondage.

JEAN. 'Tis the outdoor air
Which makes his spirit thus.

EMP. Yea, so it is.

HOB. That believe I not so much.

Enter Wedmore.

What, Wedmore, thou!

Thou here!

WED. What do you mean?

JEAN. Aha, I thot

Thou wer't not coming; chang'st thy mind?

HOB. He could

Not stay at Pavia, I knew, without
Our company.

WED. I understand you not!

EMP. There's naught to understand.

JEAN. Living as we do

Together, we all know the point at issue.

HOB. We know each other as we do ourselves.

WED. What in the name of Jupiter you mean?

EMP. Why naught, naught.

JEAN. We but welcome thy arrival.

HOB. Yea,

That thou has joined our company.

WED. Why should

You welcome me?

EMP. We're glad that you have come.

JEAN. Yea, so exceedingly.

HOB. When friends do meet

There's always joy contracted.

WED. Yea, when friends,

Not strangers, meet.

EMP. There's none in all the world

More sociable than we.

JEAN. So have we long

Time been.

HOB. E'en since our early childhood.

WED. You

Insult me, gentlemen!

JEAN. What you insulted,

Wedmore insulted?

EMP. 'Tis the first time in

My memory I knew of such a thing.

HOB. Yea, Wedmore never was insulted.

WED. Imps!

By what authority or knowledge call

You me this name of Wedmore, in the scope

And field of all my memory, I cannot

Recall my person linked with such a name.

E'en if I would that title have received

By God's baptism, still would I be thus

Identically the same in everything;

Still would I have this form, this head, this
mind,

This soul and yet I'd not go thru the world
With such a synonym, nay, nay, I'd not;
Therefore call me it not again.

JEAN. If thou
Art not he whom we once did Wedmore call
My eyes were ne'er set right.

HOB. What hast thou lost
The operation of thy mind, that thou
Speak'st thus?

WED. I ne'er have seen e'en one of you
Before and none of you have e'er saw me,
Which if 'tis true how can you say I e'er
Did have a mind to lose.

JEAN. Come, Wedmore, come,
Be sociable.

WED. You still insinuate!
You mock me! I will not be mocked, not
on
My honor, I ne'er saw your faces before,
Your total strangers, haste away from me,
Begone! Out of my sight!

HOB. Come, sport with us
No more, Wedmore.

WED. What call you me that name
Again! 'tis full within my power and my
Authority to drive you from these woods.
So if you cannot curb your babbling tongues
You know what orders to obey. Beware
Of your behavior while you stay 'bout here
Less justice fall severely. (Exit.)

HOB. Did I just dream?

EMP. In truth I do not know.

JEAN. How strange this is;

It seems the natural course of things has
changed.

HOB. Seems truly so.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE V.

Same.

Enter Sothern and Halla.

SOTH. How long are we to stay here, Halla?

HAL. Why

There's no set time; we'll stay until we feel
Like going back.

SOTH. In truth I'll know not when

I'll feel that way my feelings are so mixed.

HAL. Thou art beginning to be accustomed to
The woods and its sweet atmosphere.

SOTH. Somewhat.

HAL. So told I you.

SOTH. And yet these spacious woods

So haunted with her image are I can

Ne'er drive it from my mind.

HAL. Still, plagued with that?

I thot that was all over with.

SOTH. Nay, nay,

Such things wear not so soon 'way.

HAL. They will

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Not go as long as you do nourish them;
There are some in the world who think they
can

Drive from their being some corroding thot
By keeping fresh its memory. Think'st thou
A wound would heal if he who bore it
would

Most constantly disturb its healing?
E'en so in friendship, when between two
friends

A breach is made, which checks their inter-
course,

And they do see the folly of their step,
They still think on what has been done, in-
stead

Of starting out anew.

SOTH. But, Halla, some

Live but in one thing at a time. Whate'er
Is foremost in their lives and mind, that do
They think most of and wholly are absorbed
By its dominion. It so stirs their soul
That they can concentrate on nothing else
The focus of their thot. Thy faculties
Do hold the mechanism of thy mind
Together well, so that all images
Do enter but in their correct proportion.

HAL. But close the gateway of the mind, a
notch,

Against such all-absorbing thots, that they
Can enter not so forcibly

SOTH. My mind

Would need a savant knowingly to swing
The gate.

Enter Jean, Hobeck and Empson.
What makes you bear your continences
So strange? Has anything occurred?

JEAN. Indeed,
A feat in magic!

HAL. What was it?

HOB. Methinks

The world has changed her laws.

SOTH. Speak out, what was it?

JEAN. With words we cannot credibly de-
scribe

The witchery of this strange, strange hap-
pening.

We saw a person but a little time
Ago, resembling Wedmore in all things;
In form, features, bearing; everything
Was but identical with his; we called
Him Wedmore, whereat he was greatly
shocked

And bid us call him by that name no more.
At first we thot he sported but with us,
But then his continence took such a cast,
So full of wrath and fiery and his spirit
Forced from him such vehement words that
we

Were full convinced 'twas not Wedmore.

EMP. He e'en

Said we insulted him.

HAL. Knew you not Wedmore

Had in these woods a twin brother? perhaps
'Twas him you saw.

HOB. What, he a brother here!

HAL. So told he us.

JEAN. What fools then did we make
Of ourselves!

EMP. I nearly blush for shame.

HOB. It was

A most disgraceful and unmannerly
Way at accosting him.

HAL. Then when you meet

Him 'gain you must forgiveness ask.

JEAN. We will.

What fools will men of themselves some-
times make!

Enter Wedmore, Agatha and Hermia.

HAL. Hail, Brisben!

WED. Halla—hallilulah! 'tis

My custom to pronounce this genial phrase,
When I meet anyone here in the woods
Who greets me in familiar, friendly terms,
The very atmosphere doth draw it forth.
How comes it that these other gentlemen
Insulted me by calling me the name
Of Wedmore, now you call me by the one
That I was christened by?

HAL. 'Twas thru mistake

That they so most unmannerly did use
Your dignity, for which already they
Repented have amongst themselves. We
come

From Padua, where your brother Wedmore dwells.

He told me you lived here, but I did tell
Not those who met you first, so they knew
nought

Thereof and since you are his twin brother
They took you for him.

WED. What! you know Wedmore?

HAL. Yea, well as we do know ourselves.

JEAN. And that

Is why we thot you him, for which act we
All beg most humble pardon and forgive-
ness,

If you are not too deeply hurt.

HOB. Why did

You not tell us you had a brother by
That name when we you Wedmore called,
and so

Avoid confusion.

WED. Because I reasoned thus:

I thot you never heard of him or me,
As I none of you have e'en seen before
And if I told you I a brother had
Named Wedmore, 'twould to you be mean-
ingless.

And I would save that waste of energy

And time by trying it to you explain.

For often when you speak of one, someone,
Whom no one but you know, they ask who
'tis

You speak of, and if they but hear the name

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They will feel satisfied, e'en if to them
It has no meaning.

SOTH. What youths are these you have?

WED. They're two of my adoption.

JEAN. They are
A handsome pair.

WED. So say they all, this one
Is named Silvester, this one Commodore.

HAL. These names fit well their forms.

WED. Yea, never was
Youths christened with a more becoming
title.

But when you left said Wedmore anything
Of me?

HAL. Nay, nought except that you were here.

WED. It is a wonder he did not load you
With curses down as 'twas an excellent
chance

To give vent to his spleen.

EMP. He ne'er acts thus
He's always amiable.

WED. You do but talk;
He's nothing but a cheating, burly knave;
I like the rascal not!

SOTH. What! not like him,
Your brother?

WED. Nay, I long of him have been
Ashamed; he's but a thief, a scoundrel!

HAL. Nay,
He's a most honest fellow, friendly gay,
A jolly, good companion.

WED.. What speak you good
Of him? How can those not related get
Along with one with whom a brother cannot.

HOB. As long as we him knew he always
proved
An excellent friend.

WED. Then goes he 'bout with his
Detested qualities concealed.

EMP. He's honest.

WED. He gave me in the world no chance to
live
While I was with him; he's most selfish,
cruel,
Dishonest and a wretched prodigal.

JEAN. Perhaps he's changed since you last
saw him, now
He is a good and honest citizen
Of the whole world.

WED. Impossible! he could
Not change like that the habits he had
formed,
For they were deeply rooted in his being
And when one once doth shape his character
So that it follows in a certain trend,
'Tis hard to turn from their forced path
away.
I saw but meanness flash from his wild eye,
Heard curses from his mouth and witnessed
in

His heart destruction brewing.

HAL. 'Tis most strange

You think so hard of him when we can find
Nought bad in his career and character.

WED. Oh, speak no more of that unholy man.

I hate the very mention of his name,
And further mention will but stir the grudge
I bear him to such supreme height, that I
Will yet act desperately. No more! no
more!

Less I avenge myself on you, for thus
Upholding him; let words now cease their
flow.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE VI

Same

Enter Pinder.

PIN. These rollicking young school boys of
the city

Do stir these woods in a most merry mode

With their gay surmisings and levity.

Nowhere in all the territory of

The earth can peace established be, nowhere,
Nowhere, I thot here in these woods I
would

Not be molested still they find me out,

And fill my ears and brain with noises loud.

And yet, 'tis well, if they can thus enjoy
Themselves, I bid them on with merriment.

Enter Wedmore, Agatha and Hermia.

WED. What have we here? I really believe
these woods

Are peopled with strange creatures!

AG. One like this

I've never seen before.

HERM. He doth appear

Most strange.

WED. Perhaps 'tis Sothern suddenly

Turned old, for age was born with him.

AG. Nay, nay,

Man cannot change much in so short a time.

PIN. Yet those who trumpet thus the atmos-
phere

Surrounding them with noise and vanity,

Have not as yet received the stamp and seal

Of life's reality, else they would not

Act thus, so foolish and unmannerly.

For what are these brief span of years, com-
pared

To millions, ay to all eternity?

Then why not live full earnest, seriously

While we control the functions of our body,

And not fool time away.

WED. Then stop; break off

From speaking for you now do idle time

Away.

PIN. You here again?

WED. Nay, nay, I am

Not here again, I'm here, for if I would
 Be here again, I would not be here now;
 And if I would be here again, 'twould be
 To-morrow or next week, perhaps next
 month,

Perhaps eternity, for I was ne'er
 Here in these woods before.

PIN. Oh, strangers! eh?

More strangers; all the wood will peopled
 be

With strangers soon.

WED. So that I, too, for I've

Meet none as yet here whom I know.

PIN. But how

Could you know anyone if you just come?

WED. 'Tis what I say; I say they're strangers
 all

To me.

PIN. Then belong you to that other crew,
 That company which just arrived?

WED. How can

That be if we are strangers here? We are
 A company all by ourselves and would
 Not be united with another, nay,
 Not in the world we would not stoop to
 mix,

Our worthy metal with some base alloy,
 Which would degrade its quality; think not
 On it.

PIN. Then are you a new company.

How many companies are here? I'll yet

Be squeezed out of my little space of earth.
 WED. 'Twould be the opposite if we would
 hedge

Thee in, we'd squeeze thee in thy little
 space,

Of earth instead of out, if thou wilt but
 On this conundrum meditate and study,
 'Twill clear up in your mind, as intellects
 Are not all equally quick to perceive
 And comprehend. But truly thou, no use
 Hast for all this division of these grounds.
 The earth must be proportioned out alike
 To all, else it would be a poor, unjust
 Division for all its inhabitants,
 We must have equal privileges.

PIN. What man

Here claims belongs to the earth and air;
 what men

Collect in gold is theirs, which they can
 spend

And utilize as they desire and wish.

We cannot cage the air; pull down the sky
 Or pocket portions of the earth, or on
 Our shoulders bear the woods; we cannot
 drink

The rivers dry not in eternity.

I wish not to, I'm thankful that I can
 Enjoy their loveliness; but those who dig
 Into the bowels of the earth for gold
 And chop down trees and dam the course of
 streams,

All for their gain, do lose respect for nature,

Her glorious beauty, which to me is sacred.

WED. Then you forbid that we should breathe this air

And walk within these woods and from the streams

Refresh ourselves by tasting of their store?

When I did travel once I met a man,

Who had his narrow mind thus stubbornly set;

So firmly it was most inflexible.

Him did I tell to whirl him seven times round

And in the whirling laugh as loudly as

He could and doing this he finally

Became himself again, which if you'll do

'Twill stimulate your blood more evenly

To flow, which now does not.

PIN. By acting thus,

I would but play the fool.

WED. And yet 'twould be

But playing it another way from what

You play it now.

PIN. Oh, what a spiteful world!

Where friction grinds in dull monotony,

Forever on unceasingly. This stir

And bustle of vainglorious men I hate

Detest it all; could I but hide myself

Somewhere away where ne'er within the whirl

Of vanity I'd come. Men do not live;
They have no lives; they're simply borne
along

Within the flood and tide of things and
know

Not whither they are moving. Yet who can
Anchor his life in such complexities?

They hold not paramount that which with
life

Is vitally connected, honor, truth,

Morality and all those qualities,

Which are with immortality connected.

But rather do embrace those grosser things,

Which are all artificial to the soul.

And think they live. What grossness, evil.
all!

They live in gold, in gain and think it life.

They have no life, they've gold, deceits, un-
truths,

Those things, which are more to damnation
linked,

Than immortality.

WED. Now will I add

To my proscription an additional

Compound, for readily I comprehend

That thou in order to whirl seven times
'round

Must need'st be lubricated with the oil

First of humanity, to quicken thy

Stiff joins, bear that in mind e'er thou be-
ginn'st

To whirl. Now knowest not that natural
law

Of science that the more you blow on fire
The hotter it will burn? or knowest not
That more important one the longer that
Two bodies traveling in directions from
Each other opposite, the farther they
Apart will be? Now for the application;
The more you irritate this flame within
Your breast the hotter it will burn and
scorch

None but yourself and all the longer you
Continue it, the further from the point
Of starting you will be, which in this case
Is truth.

PIN. Oh most ungrateful harmony
Of things! why was this cruel world fash-
ioned thus!

That he who has a mind, an intellect,
A soul, to see unto the depths of things,
And meanings hidden and unclear divine,
Should be by shallow intellects mocked at,
Who penetrate not e'en the surface of
Most simple things. 'Tis most unkind to be
Misunderstood; to be sincere and yet
In all the world to find no sympathy.
'Tis cruel; yet mock, I care not, mock.

WED. Oh fye,

Fye, fye on such ungracious language, fye!
Thou hast but wandered from the fold of
men

And hast thus lost the warmth from thy heart.

'Thou can'st not take the world by either pole
And swing it o'er thy head ; it is too large,
And then there'd be a million hands to hold
It in its place, against thy puny one,
Then be content, be merry laugh, I'll have
No shrunken character, but rather fresh
And full of life.

PIN. 'Tis well, be merry, laugh,
In loud buffon, it matters not ; be gay.
(Exeunt.)

ACT III

SCENE I

Woods

Enter Sothern and Halla.

HAL. Are not those youths of Wedmore's
brother fair?

SOth. Beyond all comprehension.

HAL. It doth seem

Originally they were for angels shaped
And molded, but thru some mysterious
And unknown process they were formed into
The cast of man.

SOth. How most effectually
Works their divinity peculiar on
Our natures.

HAL. Yet for men, give me, strong men,
Men who well represent their kind and class;
Who 'tween the sexes make division marked.
I like not those who in reality
Are masculine, but are effeminate
In bearing, lacking manly qualities.

SOth. They are but more divinely tempered
than

Those who are strickly masculine; they have
Those qualities, whose secret power give
Them insight into heaven.

HAL. Perhaps, when young
They lived as gentle fairies of the woods,
And meeting scarcely anybody they
Retained their childish spirituality
And grace.

SOTH. That is their life's philosophy.
Methinks it Hermia and Agatha,
Did gaze into the lustre of their eyes
And get a glimpse of their bright rosy
cheeks,
They would disgard us all together in
Our suit.

HAL. What think you so? I believe it not
Love does not turn so swift its course awry,
Takes time to create love; it is a thing,
Which grows and springs not suddenly to
life.

SOTH. Yet oft two souls do fly together at
First sight; hast thou not seen that hap-
pened, Halla?

HAL. That have I witnessed, but such love is
like
A fire, which, when fanned by a puff of
wind,
Goes out and is no more.

SOTH. Yet often times
The glow continues long.

HAL. It cannot long

Continue all the forces of the world,
Work with consistent continuity.
Now that which breaks upon an impulse
forth

Doth break the truth of law. Two souls do
grow,

But slowly and most gradually into
Each other's favor and companionship;
And when once this relationship is well
Established they in one another live
And move and have their being.

SOTH. Then is this
Relationship 'tween Agatha and I
Established firmly; for continually
I see her in the chambers of the mind;
She is my entire mind.

HAL. Then when one feels
The spirit of another reign within,
There is no other person in the world
So dear to him, the beauty of
Apollo could not e'en turn the tide of love

SOTH. So feel I truly.

HAL. So here approach the youths.
Enter Hermia and Agatha.

Where wander you?

AG. We were but following up the trees, on
which

Were carved the double names of Agatha
And Hermia; we found it on the oaks,
The linden, beach and sycamore, on all

The different trees, which do the woods compose.

The letters all were cut identical,
Each name was by a separate hand engraved.

HAL. Who could have carved the names?

HERM. It is for you

To answer, not to information seek
The names are fresh; the sap still trickled
down

The wounded bark.

AG. You two more than all others

In all these woods, look like ones who would
do

That sort of thing.

SOTH. Youths were you e'er in love?

AG. But call us by our names.

SOTH. Well, were you ever?

AG. We'll silent be until you call us by
Our names.

SOTH. Then Commodore, were ever you
In love?

HERM. Nay, never.

SOTH. You, Silvester?

AG. Nay.

I would not be, in truth, 'tis waste of time;

'Tis nought but an affliction of mind,

I would not dote my heart and senses on

A human being thus.

SOTH. Then know you not

The power, the impulse, which doth move
our mind

To carve thus on the trees, for 'tis a force
Which love alone can teach.

HERM. 'Tis but a soul,
Wrought to a strained, unnatural pitch,
which doth
So fret and waste its substance thus.

HAL. Love is
The essence siped from immortality;
It is the very substance of our lives;
It doth contain the elements which do
Compose our being; he who ne'er beneath
Its sway has fallen captive, has ne'er tasted
The deepest gush and flow of life.

AG. Not so,
Not so, 'tis but an artificial garb
Which 'round man wraps itself, producing
much
Of mischief and misdemeanor.

SORH. You two have dwelt
Here like the flowers of the wood, which you
Do much resemble and have never met
A being to stir up that secret flame,
Which lies but dormant in your bosom, till
It shall be wakened. You are mortals, whom
'Tis hard to get acquainted with, as your
Peculiar disposition must strangely keep
Acquaintance 'way.

HERM. You but imagine this;

You live but in an ecstasy and dream
Of this you speak.

HAL. Yet 'tis an ecstasy,
Well worth the witnessing.

AG. But who are these
You so immortalize here on the trees;
This Agatha and Hermia?

SOTH. In truth,
They are two fair and lovely maids, whom
we
Have grown to love.

AG. I believe they are not worth
So much vain doting on.

HAL. Oh, speak not thus,
You do their chastity blaspheme.

HERM. No soul
Could e'er persuade me thus to spend my
time

In dreaming on them in their absence, by
The carving of their empty names.

SOTH. Yet in
Their names inhabits most the beauty of
The world, they harbor all what for us is
Most lovely and most sweet.

AG. What vanity!

SOTH. Yet come you once beneath the magic
of

This spell, you'll act the same as we.

AG. Nay, nay,
Not in the flow of time we'd stoop to such
Delusion, never.

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HERM. We could not think on it.

HAL. Your time will come.

AG. What time?

HAL. The time,

When in your breast this passion shall have
free

And open play, and you'll be by its spell
Controlled.

SOTH. That time will truly come.

HERM. Never!

AG. We'll never give our hearts to women.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE II

Same.

Enter Wedmore, Agatha and Hermia.

WED. Now have I acted excellently, yea,
Most excellently, could but every actor
Perform his role so well in life as I,
There'd be far more successes, many more.
I have worked this deception wonderfully,
And people are more easily deceived
Than I had believed, yet how could they re-
buke
My word, they had no witnesses? Laughed
you
Not Agatha when I held argument
With them and so belied their wits?

AG. Oft did

I chuckle; 'twas with difficulty I
Held back the tide of laughter.

WED. You did well,

Ay well, you played your part most perfectly,
And, Hermia, how did you act the while?

HERM. I was so filled with laughter to behold
Thee acting thus, I held my sides to let
No sound escape.

WED. Good acting; seldom do

You women thus control your wits.

AG. But did

You not when you accosted Halla, near
Forget yourself.

WED. Yea, took you note at that?

I nearly did indeed, but when a man
Has an unlimited capacity
For wit, it fails him not to strike upon
Some plan which will convey his plotting
out,

E'en to the point, which he intended it
Should reach. Now know you Commodore
and you

Silvester—for I must you call by name
And so acquaint my tongue with motion of
The correct pronunciation that I ne'er
Can say aught else when I refer to you—
Now know you, man can do what e'er he
wills

In this capricious world. What e'er one wills
Himself to do it has no hindrance; there

Are million vacancies, if men would rise,
And act to fill the need; there're chances
many

If men would undertake to shoulder
The burden of the task. Now had I not
Determined to come here, why all the mirth
Would have been lost, but I said to myself:
"Now you must go" and so I went and so,
You willed and went, and so this course of
mirth

And jollity came without calling forth
Much exultation. Now have I something
new,

Devised: when they prepare to sup to-night;
Then will I, standing from their spot not for,
All hidden in the woods, most loudly shout
For help, as if I was in danger, then
When they do run to my assistance, which
They surely will, come you from somewhere
hid

And sack their food. What say you?

AG. It will be

Great sport.

HERM. Yea, so it will.

WED. This will we do

And rob them of their spicy meal.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE III

Same.

Enter Sothern, Halla, Jean, Empson, Hobeck.

JEAN. Now come, come, lads, let's sit upon
these logs

And eat our meal, which seems a goodly
feast

Here in the woods. This gentle atmosphere
Doth rouse the appetite most wondrously
To greater keenness than on stomach's small
Capacity.

SOTH. Here are our senses all
Made keener by the freshness of the air
Surrounding us.

EMP. Methinks that Bacchus ne'er
Did have so good a feast ennobled by
Such gay exuberating spirits.

HAL. If
He did, it is no wonder poets did
Mortalize him thus in song.

HOB. Well, lets
Not have too long a prelude to the feast,
Lest we for waiting lose our appetite
And have not that for which we speak.

WED. (Outside.) Help! help!

JEAN. Hark!

WED. Help! help! What no one near!

JEAN. What can that mean!

WED. God-a-mercy! Help! Help! No answer?

HOB. Some one in danger!

WED. Quick! Quick!

HAL. Let's go to him at once.

EMP. We must.

WED. What still no help!

JEAN. Let's hurry!

(Exeunt.)

Enter Hermia and Agatha.

AG. They're all gone; what delicious fruit.

HEM. 'Tis more

Than we can carry.

AG. Nay, we are now youths.

And stronger than we're wont to be.

HEM. Shall we

Here taste the fruit?

AG. We must be off, lest they

Return much sooner than we think and catch

Us here; take this and let's be off. (Exunt.)

Re-enter Wedmore, Jean, Halla, Sothern, Hobbeck, Empson.

JEAN. But who could that have been?

WED. So wonder I;

I heard the shouting and came swiftly as

My legs would bear me, hither to assist

Him who's in danger, and when I came, I
saw

But you, none else, 'tis strange.

SOTH. He must have fled,
Or else succumbed to that, which threatened
him.

HAL. Were we not eating supper when we
ran?

EMP. Yea, so we were!

HOB. What! is our supper gone?

WED. What's the matter now?

JEAN. Someone has taken
Our supper while we're gone.

WED. Impossible!

HAL. Yea, truly so.

WED. Who could have taken it?

SOTH. That is the question.

WED. I will wager there
Be outcasts in these woods who wait on such
An opportunity.

Enter Pinder.

PIN. What's all this noise
About? Some cried for help, some murder,
some
Ran hither, others thither, that I thot
Someone was murdered; such discordant
sounds
Doth echo in these quiet and peaceful woods,
Most horrible.

WED. What, saw you anyone
'Bout here?

PIN. I saw them not for thickness of
The branches, but I heard the branches bend
And crack and bushes shake as they ran by.

WED. The thieves, the saucy villains, they are
just

The ones who stole the supper here prepared,
Exactly so, the scoundrels; could I but
O'ertake them, lo! they come again.

Enter Wayne, Discus, Roal, Saul.

Are these

The ones you saw?

PIN. I saw no one, I but
Heard them.

WED. Here are the lawless thieves, come bind
Them, men; where carried you the booty to?

WAYNE. We do not understand.

WED. Not understand?

We'll make you understand! I'll tell you
imps,

We'll have no thieving in these woods.

SOTH. Perhaps

They are not guilty.

WED. Who else could it have been?

The guilt doth gleam forth from their eyes.

I know

'Tis them. Take hold of them.

DISCUS. What then, do you

Accuse us of?

WED. Pretended innocence!

How unconcerned a thief can look.

PIN. I like

This wrangling not. (Exit.)

WED. If you return that which

You took, we'll let you have your liberty.

ROAL. We're innocent.

WED. Oh, most deceitful villains;

You innocent? You are as deep in guilt

As the most guilty, scoundrels.

SAUL. Of what pray?

WED. Of what? 'tis strange that you who did
the act

Should be so ignorant; of stealing are

You guilty, here a supper was all spread,

Which you took off, one stood a distance
'way

And called for help and while these came to
help

The one who called so loudly, others came,

And bore away the food, Oh scoundrels I

Do feel like beating you for such an act.

JEAN. I believe they thus deceived us, as we
found

No one there where the calling was.

WED. Exactly so,

Exactly so; they laid this trap for you.

HOB. To perdition with such thieves!

WED. Just so,

They ought not to be given room on earth.

SAUL. You'll not injure us.

WED. That question is

For us to settle and what we conclude

To do we'll do.

WAYNE. We know not what you speak.

ROAL. We're innocent, we're innocent.

WED. Oh, fye,

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How can such guilty rogues pronounce that
word

Of innocent; come, gentlemen, take hold
Of them, off with the rogues!

DISCUS. You'll not harm us.

WED. Beseech no more in such speech
We'll have this brought to justice. Off with
them!

(Exeunt.)

SCENE IV.

Same.

Enter Wedmore, Agatha and Hermia.

WED. You had no opposition, had you in
The expedition?

AG. None; the things did lay
There waiting for our taking.

WED. 'Twas a good
Adventure, good, indeed.

HERM. What did they say
When they came back and saw their supper
gone?

WED. They all stood in amazement, knowing
not.

How such a thing could happen.

AG. How, then came
You out of it, to what conclusion did
You come?

WED. It seems the very heavens came

To my assistance and e'en favored such
Gross lying, for as we together stood,
Debating o'er what had just happened, our
Discussion came to the attention of
The hermit, who then, thither came to see
What was the cause of such a wild uproar.
He said he heard some one run thru the
woods,

Which doubtless were you two.

AG. What were we caught?

WED. He saw you not; he heard the rustle of
The leaves as you were running.

AG. Oh, most lucky.

WED. Then as we spoke with this old hermit
there,

I happily espied some dwellers of
The wood approaching and I said "So here
They come again," and made them believe
these were

The thieves, who purposely the supper stole.
As they came up to us, I launched on them—
The poor, poor creatures, and so dazed their
brain,

They hardly knew where on the earth they
stood.

And really believed they were the thieves;
then took

They hold of them and led them off, as I
Declared this action must be brought to jus-
tice.

HERM. Most excellent sport.

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WED. To-morrow we give them
 A trial, and Agatha, you be the judge,
 While I expound to them the code of laws;
 And Hermia, you be chief witness, say
 On your way hither you found fruit along
 The way, and hide the things somewhere
 where they
 Can easily be found, and now and then
 Throw down an apple or a pair, so that
 You with some of the crew can easily
 It find, and in the finding, we'll release
 These frightened creatures from their penalty,
 You understand?

HERM. Yea, well.

AG. 'Twill prove a sport
 Most excellent.

WED. So bear in mind your parts.
 (Exeunt.)

SCENE V.

Same.

Enter Sothern, Halla, Jean, Empson and Hobbeck.

SOTH. Dishonest men e'en find the smallest
 nook,
 Of earth; whoever thot that here should be
 Such vagrants who by thieving live.

JEAN. This place
Is better suited for such business
Than many others; for here can they hide
In time of need and when they find no food
Or no provision of any kind, they can
Pluck berries for a meal.

HOB. And now they make
Us pluck the berries, as they have them-
selves

That which we had already plucked.

EMP. Oh, such
Base villains! how my anger heats my blood
As I do think of them.

HAL. Did you not see
Crime gleaming from their continence?

JEAN. I can
Not say I did; 'twas ignorance, not crime,
Which lead them to the act; they've ne'er
been taught.

Discrimination 'tween what's right and
wrong.

EMP. It was a theft, as true a one as e'er
They did commit, they are nought but
thieves.

How bold they were to come to us again.
E'en after they had taken what they did.

JEAN. If they with criminal intent did take
The things, I believe they would've not come
again

As they did.

HAL. Well, they shall come to trial;

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'Twas fortunate that Brisben was at hand
To help us out.

HOB. 'Twas fortunate, but now
My appetite is keener than before,
And if we find nought soon to eat, I'll face
The thieves and rob them in return.

JEAN. Yea, come
Let's find something our hunger to appease.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE VI

Same.

Enter Sothern, Halla, Jean, Empson, Hobeck,
Wedmore, Roal, Discus, Wayne, Saul.

WED. Have we all now assembled?

HAL. I do believe

We have.

WED. Then will we with the trial proceed.

JEAN. But where're our witnesses?

EMP. Who?

JEAN. The hermit.

WED. Our judge also has not as yet arrived.

SOth. Who is the judge?

WED. One who is fitted well

For the position, young, but capable,
One who doth understand the principles
Of law, as good as any in the land.

I've known him long, a sweet precocious
youth,

Who soon outstripped his master.

Enter Pinder.

Here's our witness.

PIN. I'm loath to stand between the wicked-
ness

And good of men; to show myself in court,

And hearken to expounding of the law

For what is crime but human frailty,

Which we all in some measure do possess,

Yet do I gladly see administered

The justice of the law without which could

The world not well be governed.

WED. With such respect

Ought every citizen, to bow before

The law, come take thy seat, thou dost desire

A higher place in life than that which now

Thou hast. This crime especially, which
they

Are guilty of, requires the iron grip

Of law, for 'tis a great offense, 'tis e'en

The breaking of a commandment, stealing,
why

A man ought to be hanged for stealing.

Enter Agatha.

Lo,

Here comes our worthy judge; most worthy
judge,

Take thine exalted seat. Now are we all

Assembled. Witness now thy story.

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PIN. Last night as I prepared my evening meal,

I heard a sudden cry for help, which cry
Reechoed thru the whole surrounding wood.
I frightened by the sound put on my cloak
And went directly toward the place, where
seemed

The shout uprose, and as I hastened thither
A little way e'en from this spot, I heard
A noise, as of some persons running thru
The woods and talking lowly as they ran.

WED. Sufficient, mark you that, most worthy judge,

He heard e'en near this place, from where
the things

Were stolen, the sound of men, who fled
from here.

Why, that's enough, sufficient evidence,
Those who stand in the indictment accused
Are these : Saul, Roal, Wayne and Discus
If it were not for mere respect of law
We'd give them punishment without a trial,
Now, Saul, where was you born?

SAUL. Here.

WED. Here? be more

Explicit, thou wast not born here, no one
E'er lived here, where was't born?

SAUL. Here in the woods.

WED. These woods are large, I know not
whether thou

Was't born in this or in that portion.

SAUL. In this one.

WED. Thou need'st a pedagogue to pull thy ears

And make thy tongue work right; but those must be

Explicit I will tell thee not again.

When was't thou born?

SAUL. Oh, since the time of Adam.

WED. By thy capacity of intellect

Methot thou was't before him born. How old

Then are you?

SAUL. Old as my little finger.

WED. What still thou answerest me thus villain?

Thou'rt guilty, knave; thou dost not follow as

Thou ought the order of the law. Remove Him, gentlemen, he's guilty; judge, what is Your verdict?

AG. Guilty.

WED. Yea, and nothing else.

SAUL. I am not guilty.

WED. No more from thee, thou'rt guilty, Guilty of stealing. Now, Roal, come take this seat.

Where was't thou born Roal?

ROAL. Where Saul was.

WED. Oh, such base imposition, they're all guilty;

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Take him away, come, gentlemen, he's guilty,
What say you, judge?

AG. Guilty.

WED. My judgment ne'er
Is far from being correct. The next is
Wayne.

Come forth and take your place, where was
you born, Wayne.

WAYNE. In a house by the old cross road.

WED. And where is that?

WAYNE. From here you go past the big oak,
from there

To the big linden, from there to the willow,
Then go you 'long the brook a ways, until
You reach the big elm tree, then from the
pine

You go directly to the house.

WED. Oh, heavens!

'Twere easier for one who never looked
Into Euclid's geometry to find

Correct solution for the problems giv'n
Than by this information find the house.

For which we searched, which way is it and
how far.

WAYNE. A half mile north.

WED. Now are you coming to

The point, intended, there was't born and
lived

How lived you?

WAYNE. By food.

WED. Yea, but how got you
The food?

WAYNE. By work.

WED. What kind of work?

WAYNE. We worked
Herein the works.

WED. You worked at thieving, villain,
You will not out with your true occupation!
You're guilty; all your life you lived by steal-
ing
What say you, judge.

AC. Guilty.

WED. He could be nought else.
Last on my list the name of Discus stands.
Come forward, Discus; where were you
born?

DIS. Not far from here.

WED. How far?

DIS. A mile.

WED. How made you a livelihood?

DIS. By hunting and trapping.

WED. Yea, by entrapping men and hunting
things
To eat and steal; you scoundrels all are
guilty.

We did but waste our precious time here in
This trial, had we but given punishment,
According to our sentiment we would've
Long had this over with and justly done.
What is the verdict, judge? What's the ex-
tent

Of their great guilt. I cannot a punishment,
Severe enough pronounce.

Enter Hermia, eating apples.
Where came you from,
So suddenly?

HERM. Oh, from the woods.

WED. How came
You by that fruit?

HERM. I found it on the way;
All 'long the path was scattered fruit.

WED. 'Tis but
The path these thieves fled o'er; go some of
you
And follow Commodore and trace the fruit
As far as you can follow it by clue
Perhaps you can find the hiding place.

HAL. This will we do.

Exunt Hermia, Halla and Sothern.

PIN. These woods to me are a most sacred
shrine

And I'll not continence within their great
Domain dishonesty of any kind.
Therefore let them if they are guilty, not
Escape without deserved punishment,
That this may end these hateful pillages.

WED. Just so think I this wickedness shall
have

An end and I will see that it come to
That end; I'll have justice administered.

Reenter Hermia, Halla, Sothern.

HAL. We found it all!

WED. Found it?

SOTH. All that we had
Prepared.

WED. The truth will always come to light, 'tis
like

The sun, when he begins to shine, and dims
The moon, which borrows from its orbs its
light.

How base doth falsehood look when truth
reveals

Itself. But since we've found that which
was stolen

We will eliminate the penalty,
And caution them in what they do hereafter.
(Exeunt.)

ACT IV

SCENE I

Woods

Enter Wedmore and Ann.

WED. Why, come, Ann; come along.

ANN. Where lead you me?

WED. Oh, ask not that, that is no question for
A lover to ask.

ANN. I saw you ne'er before.

WED. That matters not, nay, nay, it matters
not;

For love doth bubble like a fountain forth
When it doth meet that which it longs to
meet.

I never saw you in all time before
And yet as I did catch a glimpse of thy
Majestic eye my heart began at once
To faster beat and 'neath the spell of love
To flutter, Ann, now lovest me not?

ANN. What is love?

WED. It is something thou dost feel,
Ann.

ANN. What is that?

WED. Thou goest too deep, too deep.

Ann, yea, thou dost ask much, thou goest far
Beyond the limit and circumference
Of my enlightened mind, as e'en the great
Philosophers have failed in finding for
This strange mysterious affinity
A definition and I'll not transcend
These wise philosophers, no, I will not.
'Twould lack politeness and not show them
due

Respect. Now love its center has about
The heart.

ANN. The heart!

WED. For into it doth Cupid shoot,
His wee bewitching darts, the nectared points
Of which are well anointed with the heat
And longing of another heart.

ANN. How strange

You talk! Why darts are dangerous things,
I'll none
Of them in my heart.

WED. Ann, lovest thou me not?

ANN. I do not know.

WED. Oh, yes, you do; do you
Not feel a pang about thy heart?

ANN. Nay, no darts within my heart, nay,
nay (tries to tear away.)

WED. Ann! Ann!

Where flee'st thou to?

ANN. I go to Saul.

WED. Ho, Ann!

A minute; stay; come back.

ANN. Nay, I'll not stay. (Exit.)

WED. Oh, thou enchanting little creature, must
I follow thee? Love is most patient in
Pursuit and travels uncomplainingly. (Exit.)

Enter Agatha, Hermia, Bess and Fay.

AG. Now, Bess, thou must forget the name of
Roal

I have thee in my hold just now.

BESS. But how

Can I forget him?

AG. Why stop thinking of him.

BESS. That's what I cannot do.

AG. Would you, not one

Who has a fairer skin, a brighter eye

A form more graceful and in everything

Proportioned well?

BESS. Nay, give me Roal with his

Tanned cheek and blistered hands.

AG. Alas, how love

Doth seek out its own kind and sets all else
At nought. But Bess wilt thou thus disap-
point

My hopes?

BESS. I cannot act otherwise.

HERM. Now Fay

Sweet Fay, I'm sure thou would'st not treat
me thus.

Thou art the staff upon which lean my hopes,

How from thine eyes beam peace and sweet
content;

Thy voice is as a feast unto my soul,
And every action of thy being finds
Within mine own reception corresponding.

FAY. Oh, what strange visitors you are.

HERM. You think

But so.

FAY. And know it, too.

HERM. Now love'st me not?

FAY. May be.

HERM. Come, tell the truth.

FAY. I do not know.

HERM. Come, tell me if you love me.

FAY. I don't know.

BESS. I must be off.

AG. Where go'st thou, Bess?

BESS. Away. (Exit.)

FAY. Wait, Bess, I'll follow thee. (Exit.)

HERM. How sudden this

Departure.

AG. Come, let's follow them (Exeunt).

Reenter Wedmore with Ann and Nell.

WED. The woods are full of angels, flowers
grow

E'en the most beautiful, which in the air,
Waste their sweet fragrance, ne'er inspiring
men

With their rich beauty; a glimpse of which
would give

Man such an impetus of newer life

'Twould elevate his spirits supremely high.
Now, Ann, you must not envy Nell; nor,
Nell,
You must not envy Ann, because you both
Are in my company. This is no place
For jealousy, not in the world; the more
The merrier, is not that true?

NELL. Oh let
Me go.

WED. What, let you go? I let you go?
That you can go and hide yourself and I
Can never gaze into those eyes of thine
And drink thy beauty? How can I think
of't.

ANN. You found me first.

WED. So did I, Ann, and thou
Shalt be the last, I'll e'er attempt to find.

NELL. Then why did you find me?

WED. I did not search

For you, I simply met you, met you, Nell.

NELL. And took me 'way from Wayne.

WED. Nell love'st me not?

ANN. Oh,—I—I—

WED. Yea, I know that thou dost Ann

But Nell, what say'st thou to my question?

ANN. She

Knows not what love is, I had it explained,
I know.

WED. Come, Nell, what say'st thou?

ANN. She knows

Not what you mean, I—I,

WED. Yea, I know,
I know, Ann; Nell, come speak out.

NELL. I'll not stay,
I'll go to Wayne.

WED. You cannot go, I hold
You fast; how sweet you really are.

ANN. Her eyes
Are not pretty.

WED. You must not them compare
With yours, Ann, yours are as two bright
stars.

Enter Roal.

ROAL. Ann! Ann! I've found you now!

WED. What, you! You here!
You whom we did accuse of stealing!

ROAL. Oh, Ann.

WED. Get hence, thou thief! How can you
look me in

The eye when I accused thee once of theft?

ROAL. Hast thou forsaken me, Ann?

WED. The guilty know no shame, no, none.

Enter Wayne.

WAYNE. Nell, Nell! where fled you to?

WED. Well, I'll be hanged,
If the whole tribe is not surrounding me
They must again be brought to justice.

WAYNE. Nell,
Art thou no longer mine?

WED. You are not fit
To have so fair a creature for a wife
How can you think on it! Oh, villainy,

What is this world a coming to, that thieves
Should marry angels? herein lies the cause
For marriage broils, divorces and all evils
Which follow from the holy wedlock bond.
What would thy offspring be, but like thee,
thieves,

Of which there are too many in the world,
Already, therefore be a bachelor,
And breed no more of thy accursed stamp.

WAYNE. Oh, Nell, what become of us?

WED. I can

Tell thee what will become of thee if thou
Dost linger, here much longer.

WAYNE. Come, Nell, let's be off!

WED. Oh, villain, come not close, distant
yourself

Less we do come to blows, and I'll make you
A sorry picture; stand away!

ROAL. Oh, Ann, come!

WED. I pity you both, if you arouse my anger.
Enter Agatha, Hermia, Fay and Bess, Saul
and Discus.

SAUL. Oh Fay! Fay! Fay!

HERM. What thou still following?

DISCUS. Bess, art thou leaving me?

AG. Thou hast no more

To do with her.

DISCUS. Oh, I shall die for pining.

AG. Go, leave us.

WED. Have you all assembled here
Again? A band of thieves can never stay

Apart; do you remember not that but
Few hours since you guilty plead for steal-
ing

And we to pity moved for you, did give
You pardon for your good behavior
And now you bother us again. Now get
You from our sight less we do bring you
'gain

To justice with a double punishment.

ROAL. Oh, Ann.

WAYNE. Sweet Nell.

WED. What still so slow to move.

If you once stir my ire you'll wish that you
Had gone.

SAUL. Shall I see you no more, Fay?

DISCUS. Oh, Bess, I cannot go.

WED. No more of that.

Dispatch yourselves at once.

ROAL. This is a cruel world.

SAUL. Most cruel.

WED. 'Twill seem more cruel if you do not
haste.

Exunt (Roal, Saul, Wayne, Discus).
So e'en the innocent, when overpowered,
Imagine themselves guilty, but you two
Are poorly matched.

AG. And thou art overmatched.

WED. When we encounter the rest we'll dis-
tribute

Some of our captured prize.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE II, same

Enter Sothern and Halla.

SOTH. How long have we been here now,
Halla?

HAL. I

Have lost the days, they've sped so rapidly
Away that I could not keep pace with them.
I believe a goodly portion of our time
Appointed is already gone.

SOTH. Here can

We not feed on the calendar and watch
Time journey on from day to day and pick
Out days, which to us are important most,
And say on such or such a day comes this
Or that event, which we most anxiously
Await.

HAL. What do thy thots already turn
Toward home?

SOTH. Not strongly, yet 'tis a long time
To be away from people.

HAL. From Agatha
You mean.

SOTH. Think'st not of Hermia, too?

HAL. Not so,
I have not thot of our return. It seems
You think if you remain too long away

Your absence will give leaf for some unknown

Force to creep in and make you strangers to
Each other. When you'll have her to yourself

Perhaps you'll weary of familiarity
And wish you're yet a little strange.

SOTH. That time

Shall never come, no, never, Halla.

HAL. You think

But so, as many youthful lovers do.
And when the honeymoon is over with
Then gradually abates that sacred flame
Which drew your souls together.

SOTH. I do not see

How you, a lover, can thus speak. These
words

Must be but fashioned by the lips with no
Root in the heart.

Enter Wedmore with Ann and Nell (not seeing Sothern and Halla).

WED. sings: So merrily flies time;

Come, Bacchus, with thy juicy wine;

There's a maid for every man,

A maid for every man,

Two for the lucky pedestrian.

Come, Ann, be merry, Nell, look not so sober.

ANN. What want you then with two?

WED. To feed my eyes

On Ann; one for each eye; love has a huge

Huge stomach, whose digestion far exceeds
The nourishment it doth receive. One on
Each arm; why that's the proper way, so
'tis.

Then are we all surrounded in sweet love
And have not only one side warmed.

NELL. Squeeze not
My arm so tight.

WED. 'Tis but the lover's style.

HAL. Methinks here do they practise bigamy.

SOth. Seems so.

HAL. Then worry not thyself 'bout Agatha,
For here we can have many as we wish.

SOth. But she is worth far more than all of
these.

WED. Now, Ann, thou hast a lovely eye and
Nell

Thou hast a rosy cheek, both have (sees
Hal. and Soth.) What people here!

A person cannot e'en express himself.

In love and let expand that passion, which

Doth constitute the center of our being

Without some one lying in ambuscade?

Here came I purposely that I could dote

Upon the sweetness of these beauteous
maids,

But e'en the solitary woods, will not,

Befriend one long enough for that.

HAL. Thou hast

More than thou canst command.

WED. What, only two,

How can a man command an entire army
If one cannot command two?

HAL. In the case

Of love 'tis different, yea, very much,
For in an army you but orders give
And at the hearing all the soldiers do
As they are bid in quick obedience.
Not so in love, you do not say do this
Or that and on the bidding it is done,
But you must win by sympathy, not force;
By patience, not by unripe hastiness.
And by this process break that hateful bar,
Which keeps men's hearts asunder, one soul
we

Can fashion after ours, but two just make
Confusion.

WED. I most readily perceive

You youths were ne'er in love and know not
how

Its course proceeds, else you would not
speak thus.

SOTH. Oh, Halla.

WED. Here in the woods are we all mated, all
And if you ne'er did love a fair young maid
'Tis time you do it and if you remain
Here in these woods you must seek out a
mate.

I believe not in these bacholers, nay, nay,
I'll never be a bacholer, and so
Advise you also not to lead such lives.

The're maidens in these woods pick your-
selves out

One of the prettiest, that's next to these
Who lean now on my arm and be more like
Yourself, no bacholer, for me, nay, none.

SOTH. Oh, Halla.

Enter Agatha, Hermia, Fay and Bess.

WED. See, we've all mated here, all.

AG. singing:

So glides the time along
In dance and mirthful song
With love our happiness to crown.

WED. This is

An excellent song, Silvester, excellent,
Can'st sing some more? Thy voice is truly
sweet

And stretches toward the woman's treble.

AG. I'm out of practice and can sing not well.

WED. And yet 'tis well; what think you, gen-
tlemen,

Here are some youths who are not mated,
have

You ever heard of such a thing?

HERM. Nay, never.

AG. Methot all men were mated here.

WED. I thot

So, too, but here are some who're not.

HERM. 'Tis strange.

Enter Jean, Hobeck, Empson.

WED. And here are others who do violate.
The law of nature.

JEAN. How so?

WED. Why you are
Not mated.

JEAN. Mated, how does that the laws
Of nature violate?

WED. Why, man is not
A full and complete being unless he
Doth have his compliment, not in the world,
Takes two to make one.

HOB. Thy philosophy
Doth harmonize not with the laws of num-
bers
Takes two ones to make two.

WED. What ignorance!
Hast never heard of fractions? how dost
thou
Compute in numbers? One half and one
half
Is one, is't not? Man is one half and woman
The other, they together make just one
Dost thou not understand?

JEAN. Thy head doth hold
More than thou art aware of.

WED. Yet 'tis now
My arms which counsel thus my head and
mind.
I would advise you everyone who is
But half a being to unite with that
Which makes him into a whole. Let me
not see

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You in this wretched condition again.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE III, same

Enter Pinder.

PIN. Most men are with insanity somewhat
Infatuated and to actions strange
Propelled, which otherwise they would not
stoop
To do. Most men? Yea all; we all do
things,
Which credits not the greatness of our na-
tures.
That we, the top and the paragon of all
Creation, should so strangely deviate
In byways from the pilgrimage of life
Which ought to be directed by truth's light.
Doth prove our inconsistencies; that we
Have not in strict control our functions all.
There was but one born in the world of all
Men that were born, who had his faculties
All balanced equally and sane in all
His actions, but he was coeternal with
The Father, guided by celestial light
Now that these youths do so carve up the
trees
With names and do the language interrupt
Which thru their bark and form and foliage

The Father speaks with which he means instruct

Mankind, doth show the looseness of their minds.

I'll have this carving stopped; yea, so I will;
I'll not endure my sermons thus transfigured,
These wanton jades who know naught but
their books

Oft know far less than those who ne'er
perused

The contents of a book and I will tell
Them so, poor fools, and yet their actions
are

Perhaps the nomenclature of blind love,
Which often makes men strangely act. But
here

They come.

Enter Sothern and Halla.

Here come you who came up the trees.

SOTH. What's that to you?

PIN. Much, much indeed, this is
My world, here dwell I year by year and you
But come here perhaps once in all your life
And act as if 'twas your possession,
So care not how it doth appear, when you
Are gone and I must bear the follies of
Your vagaries, I'll no more of it.

HAL. Why storm'st thou man?

Wherein doth lie the harm of carving on
The trees a name, which e'en will make the
sap

More sweet. Lived I here in these enchant-
ing woods

There would not be a tree, but what I'd
brand with this same name, which sweet-
ens e'en the shade,

As it doth cool the overheated ground.

I'd so mark up the trunks that men would
think.

'Twas not a forest but a mummary
In Egypt.

PIN. Oh, Vanity, how thou dost stir
The hearts of men, I'm glad you dwell not
in

This forest to destroy its sacredness.

SOTH. But soon the bark will overgrow again
These names.

PIN. Yea, but 'twill leave a flaw, which will
Despoil the beauty of the trees, if they
Thus vanish, it profits you nought to carve,
For all these marks will soon be worn away
And e'en if they would last in permanence,
No one but you could understand their
meaning

They would be of no interest to the world,
But go on carve, yet I would have you stop.

(Exit.)

HAL. He is most irritable.

SOTH. Yea, so he is,
But he has passed into the final stage
And is no more by that sap nourished, which
Prolongeth into age the spirit of youth

And keeps a fresh and constant sympathy
With it.

HAL. But we do no injustice to
Him or the world by carving on the trees.

SOTH. But what's the use
Of carving those dull, lifeless characters,
When we to the initiative force
Have access, which promoted their por-
trayal?

They are all mated here, yea, Halla, all.
Then should we walk here in this frozen
style

When we are mated, too? and e'en for our
Celibacy made sport of; never; could
I but snatch Mercury's wings or Pegasus'
I'd lift this body in mid air and fly
To her abode and catch her in embrace.
Oh, could the air of morning waft me thither
That I could come there swiftly and without
Exertion, yet all this avails me nought;
I'll dream of her to-night and in the vision
Have blessed consolation.

HAL. Poor soul, how love
Doth bloat thy veins, I pity thee, thou'll yet
Go mad o'er love.

SOTH. 'Tis better to go mad
O'er love, then o'er celibacy.

HAL. The truth
Is, Sothern, I'm now feeling as thou art
Of late; we can a messenger or two
To Padua send, to bring them hither

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SOTH. But who could we send?

HAL. Perhaps these youths would do the errand.

SOTH. Quite likely so; lo! here they come.

Enter Hermia and Agatha.

Most happily arrived.

HERM. For us 'tis not

So happily, as we go here and there

In the same spirits.

HAL. Go you on errands, youths?

AG. Yea, constantly, we're taught to serve.

HAL. Then will

You favor us?

AG. With greatest of pleasure; what's

Your errand?

HAL. To bear a letter to Padua.

AG. This will we most gladly do.

HAL. Here is

The letter and here's gold enough for both.

Go you immediately.

HERM. If 'tis your will. (Exeunt.)

SCENE IV, same

Enter Jean, Empson, Bess, Fay.

JEAN. To study brooks and rocks and flowers
and trees

Affords much pleasure yet to have a soul

Lean gently on your arm outcompasses

These all. Now, Bess, lag not so far behind.

BESS. I'm tired.

JEAN. That is no word for lovers to use.

BESS. We've been

Paraded much to-day, now came these, now
Came those to visit us, how blessed to
Be beautiful.

JEAN. You must forget those youths.

BESS. That's impossible.

EMP. Now, Fay, thou dost

Not think of those fair youths.

FAY. Nay, ne'er at all.

EMP. So ought we all to live, forget the past;
Look to the future; let the memory
Ne'er troubled be with yesterday with things
Grown old.

JEAN. How can we know what's old?

There's nothing old, but that which we make
thus

Appear to be; all things, which on our
minds

Impressions make are always new, but why
Philosophise in love, come let's be merry
Not cold and unclimatic.

(Enter Hobeck.)

HOB. (Aside). It seems the Lord has graciously favored them.

EMP. Come, Fay, can't sing?

FAY. I cannot sing.

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JEAN. Why ask for music when the birds and
trees

Are full of melody?

EMP. They may be full;

The sweetest music comes from human
throat

From one whose soul is with the auditor
In harmony.

HOB. (Aside). And I must drink this in.

EMP. Come, Fay, sing.

FAY. I cannot.

EMP. I'll teach thee how.

FAY. How.

HOB. (Aside). Where can I find one.

EMP. Begin thus:

Our hearts are merry,

FAY. Our hearts are merry.

JEAN. Thou hast an excellent voice.

EMP. Our hearts are merry,

For love all grief doth bury

Here 'neath the heavenly blue

And makes our hearts anew.

Without nor wine nor cherry.

HOB. (Aside). For love all griefs doth bury!

FAY. Our hearts are merry,

For love all grief doth bury,

Here 'neath the heavenly blue;

And makes our hearts anew

Without nor sack nor cherry.

JEAN. Good growth, most excellent.

Enter Wedmore, Ann and Nell, singing.

WED. Our hearts are merry,
Without nor wine nor cherry.
To Hob. What, you stand here thus sin-
glely when all should have a mate?

HOB. I've found not yet.

WED. Oh, fool! know you not that e'en every
maid

From time of maidenhood doth bend the
trend

Of meditation upon marriage and needs
Nought but the wooing?

HOB. I've found none yet to ask.

WED. Then for the sake of charity, I'll give
Thee this one, whose name is Nell, let her
be thine

Forever.

HOB. How fortune smiles so suddenly!

WED. Now can we all join in this lover's
song. (Exeunt.)

ACT V

SCENE I, Woods

Enter Sothern and Halla.

SOTH. They must be nearly there; think'st
not, Halla?

HALL. I believe they're not half way.

SOTH. How slow and how
Reluctant human feet; 'tis well the soul

Doth pattern not its gait after the snail,
But that when 'tis moved to a travelling
mode

It like a flash of lightning is everywhere
At once; then when we seek companionship
We have it at the bidding of the mind.
Yet while our souls fly on immortal wings
Our feet must to more natural laws conform
And move in shackled strides. May some
watchful

Divinity attach wings to their limbs,
That they their destiny may sooner reach.

HAL. If thou would but have patience they'd
arrive

There just the same, we cannot push an act
To its completion by sighing for it.

SOTH. And yet we cannot drown the great-
ness of

Our soul's desire; if we could do all what
We wish to do, then our accomplishments
Would near embrace infinity in all
Its vastness; for with such an appetite
As our souls have, the elements could pour
Their substance in their mouth and yet they
would

Inquire for food.

HAL. Thy mind is given a bit
To exaggeration.

Singing outside:

Our hearts are merry
For love all grief doth bury.

SOTH. What is that singing?

HAL. I know not.

(Jeañ and Bess pass across stage singing.)

Here 'neath the heavenly blue

And makes our life anew

Without nor wine nor cherry.

((Exunt.))

HAL. Whence found he that maid?

SOTH. 'Tis hard to tell.

HAL. All here were strangers when they
came.

SOTH. E'en like ourselves.

HAL. More singing!

(Empson passes o'er stage with Fay.)

Sing to the jolly life

For this is truly life

To find a handsome wife.

(Exunt.)

SOTH. We surely haven't found the best part
of

The woods.

HAL. 'Tis true, they all have partners here.

But are those not the maidens, which not
long

Ago accompanied the youths?

SOTH. Seems truly so.

HAL. More singing!

(Hobeck passes over stage with Nell, sing-
ing.)

Oh, life is not so dreary,

As silly mortals deem

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If you but find a fairy lass
And taste life's sweetest cream.

SOTH. See e'en the backward Hobeck has
found a mate.

HAL. Seems strange.

SOTH. And we, who far outstrip
These in society must stand and gaze
At them.

HAL. But what's the remedy?

SOTH. Why let's
Go back to Padua.

HAL. Hark! more singing!
Wedmore singing outside.

So let the trumpets sound
The world around (Enters with Ann)
When two in one are bound
And each his mate has found.

WED. What you two still stand here like life-
less forms?

It seems the fire, which Prometheus stole
From heaven, means nought to you; wake
up and be
Yourselves; let stagnant waters have no
room

In your immortal bosom; come, Ann, come,
Let's go; these for us do afford not fit
Society. (They pass on.)

SOTH. Oh, Halla, let's go back to Padua
Immediately.

HAL. Why should we go, when we
Just sent for them? if we act foolishly,

They may desert us altogether.
(Exunt.)

SCENE II, same

Enter Wedmore, Agatha and Hermia.

WED. I think we must become ourselves again,
Else if we live too long outside ourselves
We'll yet grow out of our real natures.

AG. We
Just pledged ourselves as messengers to go
To Padua and bear a message thither
For Sothern and Halla.

WED. 'Tis well this pledge,
It fits our purpose.

HERM. They e'en gave us gold.

WED. How well our efforts strike the arrived-
at goal.

Yet so are most our actions, we know not
On whom a benediction we bestow
Or on whom malcontent, or how our words
Will take effect, we act most to the air
And leave to chance the outcome.

AG. We will mock
Them with the gold when we do recognize
Each other.

WED. Give them back their gold in jest.
First go to them and tell them you were
there.

To Padua, but those you sought could not

Be found; say they most strangely disappeared.

Then presently will I come on the scene
And them accost by their real names, and
say

I just from Padua arrived and brought
You long.

HERM. This will be sport.

WED. Then while I hold

Them in a friendly discourse, you stand by
In your accustomed dress, that I can call
You to us at my will.

AG. So let it be.

(Exunt Agatha and Hermia.)

WED. But yet a few days more and I shall be
A husband and Sweet Ann shall be a wife.
How sweetly traced a smile its sugared
path

About her dainty mouth, which, widening,
spread

Its course most gently o'er her reddening
cheek,

As I the question leniently approached.

She could well blush, for as I've always said

The woman that gets me, can well be proud.

Then when this great event shall come about

And in the history of the world be set

And catalogued, there will soon on earth

A wise and worthy generation spring.

If Ann grows headstrong as the years go by

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Then will I say: "Now, Ann, be gentle
Ann,
Sweet Ann, remember'st not thy youth,
when we
First meet." If I instead of her grow stub-
born
Let her rebuke me likewise, yet they say
That marriage grows monotonous and all
The vows, which they in honeymoon do
make
Soon grow outworn; yet I will try my luck.
(Exit.)

SCENE III, same

Enter Sothern and Halla.

SOTH. To-day I prophesied they would re-
turn.

HAL. 'Tis hard to tell.

SOTH. They certainly are now
On their return.

HAL. But the liability
Of accident must be tak'n into account.

SOTH. I ne'er heard of an accident occur
'Tween here and Padua.

HAL. Perhaps to them
The first shall happen then.

SOTH. Oh, Halla, thou
Wilt yet unnerve me utterly.

HAL. So here

They come.

Enter Agatha and Hermia.

Welcome back!

SOTH. Have they set out?

AG. We could not find those whom you sent
us for.

HAL. How so?

HERM. They're not at home.

SOTH. How can that be?

AG. We do not know. (Exunt Ag. and Her.)

SOTH. Had we but stayed at Padua.

HAL. I do

Not understand where they have gone.

Enter Wedmore and Ann.

WED. God bless you, I've found you at last;
old friends

Will meet; how are you, Halla, and you,
Sothorn?

HAL. You never acted this familiar before.

WED. What I, Wedmore, ne'er acted so fa-
miliar

Before? how can you think of it?

SOTH. But you

Are Brisben!

WED. Nay, not so, have you so long

Been gone that you no longer recognize

Old friends.

HAL. But Brisben courted that same girl,

Which now leans on your arm.

ANN. Are you not Brisben?

WED. Tush, Ann! But she took me for him
and I

To carry out the joke said nothing,
But let her think me him and at first sight
My heart did yearn for her.

ANN. Then let me go?

WED. Ann, Ann know'st me not?

SOTH. How came you here?

WED. I just from Padua arrived.

HAL. Blessed news!

SOTH. Where Agatha and Hermia?

WED. Oh, them

I brought along, they're in the woods be-
hind.

SOTH. Let's haste to them at once!

WED. They'll be here presently, lo! here they
come.

Enter Agatha and Hermia.

SOTH. Oh, Agatha.

HAL. A most happy meeting.

AG. Here is your gold.

HAL. Where got you that gold?

HERM. In a most honest way.

HAL. I do not understand.

AG. You gave it to us.

SOTH. What! To you!

HERM. We were your messengers.

WED. And I, Wedmore, was Brisben.

HAL. Impossible!

AG. We followed you hither.

HAL. Oh, how deceived.

114 THE SPIRIT OF THE WOODS

SOTH. This meeting is the sweeter made, by
what

We have endured. Thus suffering doth give
Us keener relish for true happiness.

Enter Hobeck, Empson, Jean, Nell, Bess and
Fay.

WED. See what unions I have made!

SOTH. All, hail Wedmore.

HAL. He is indeed the orb about which we
As satilites do move.

WED. Now, pet no more,
We'll all return to Padua and there
Enjoy the profits which we here received.
(Exeunt.)

END.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

HALLA, *in love with Hermia*

SOTHERN, *in love with Agatha*

HOBECCK, }

JEAN, }

EMPSON, }

Friends to Sothern and Halla

BURDETTE, *Father of Sothern*

MICHAEL, *Father of Halla*

WEDMORE,

PINDER, *a hermit*

SAUL, }

ROAL, }

WAYNE, }

DISCUS, }

Dwellers in the woods

AGATHA, *in love with Sothern*

HERMIA, *in love with Halla*

ANN, }

FAY, }

NELL, }

BESS, }

Girls of the woods

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